

Seek The Old Paths

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein."
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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GOD SHALL SEND THEM STRONG DELUSION

Gary McDade

Religious people often presuppose an inordinate security regarding doctrinal matters. A failure in allowing the truth to guide their thinking has left many with the idea that if a thing is believed strongly enough "it just must be so, God would not allow it to be otherwise!" Paul wrote of this attitude telling how some would perish. *"Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth..."* (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

God is *"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (2 Peter 3:9). But when people, even very religious people, tamper with God's truth and refuse to receive the love of the truth, he gives them up. Of those "who changed the truth of God into a lie," Paul said, *"For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections...God gave them up to uncleanness...God gave them over to a reprobate mind..."* (Rom. 1:24-26,28).

Ahab, king of Israel (875-854 B.C.), and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah (874-850 B.C.), provide an Old Testament illustration of God sending strong delusion to those who love not the truth. When Jehoshaphat "waxed great exceedingly," Ahab sought affinity between Israel and Judah in order that they might go to war against Syria at Ramoth-gilead. Jehoshaphat requested audience with a prophet that the Lord might

be consulted concerning this matter. Along with Zedekiah son of Chenaanah who seems to be a ring-leader, about four hundred prophets prophesy the battling of Syria at Ramoth-gilead to be just the thing to do. Perhaps Jehoshaphat is skeptical of Ahab's prophets, so, he asked, *"Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?"* Ahab replied, *"There is yet one man, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla."* The messenger that fetched Micaiah gave him instructions, *"Behold, the words of the prophets declare good like one of theirs, and speak thou good."* When Micaiah parroted the messenger's canned prophecy, Ahab retorted, *"How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the Lord?"* Micaiah then told the true prophesy from God: *"These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace."* King Ahab now admits that his presumptuous tampering with the four hundred prophets has not been able to shroud the truth: *"Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?"* At this point in the narrative the veil is drawn back and the reader is allowed to witness what had gone before in the development of these prophesings, and it is here that the lesson of "God's sending them strong delusion" finds its greatest efficacy. Micaiah said, *"Therefore hear the word of the Lord; I saw the*

Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall entice [persuade] Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead. And one spoke saying after this manner; and another saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee" (1 Kings 22:19-23; 2 Chron. 18:18-22).

Ahab listened to the lying prophets, went to Ramoth-gilead, and was killed by the Syrians, all because he "received not the love of the truth" as spoken by Micaiah.

The truth of God is the word of God: *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth"* (John 17:17). *The Gospel of our salvation is contained in the word of truth: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise"* (Eph. 1:13). The word of truth is alive and active: *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged*

(Continued on page 29)
Strong Delusion...



Editorial...

LOVE THE TRUTH MORE THAN MEN

Truth today is compromised when people by their actions show they have little faith in God's power to save, the Gospel (Rom. 1:16).

It amazes me that people do not love the truth. However, I should not be surprised for that is the way it has been since the beginning of time. The Lord makes clear that the vast majority do not love the truth and will not adhere to the truth. He said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14). "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43).

It amazes me even more to see that many brethren do not love the truth, don't know what the truth is and worst of all, from their actions and comments it appears they don't even want to know the truth. One recent letter said, "I am very concerned with your publication of *Seek the Old Paths*. I request you to stop this publication. Young people are turning away from the church of Christ because they see this publication." I'm at a loss for words when this sentiment is expressed. I'm totally flabbergasted. Such people have no idea what the truth is all about. Do they even know what the work of the church is? They are willing for the truth to be trodden under foot while error is promoted. They uphold the hands of those who are leading thousands and millions into apostasy while at the same time trying to stop the mouths of those who are calling attention to falsehood and error that damns men's souls. They need a strong dose of learning from

the prophets of the Old and New Testaments. They need to learn the prophet's message from Jehovah. Isaiah was instructed to "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isa. 58:1). Paul told Timothy to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2).

Remember what Paul said? "Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Titus 1:11). Who among the criticizers today is seeking to stop the mouths of false teachers and those who practice error? Where are they? Who are they? Their philosophy is "anything goes," don't you dare say "no" to anyone. The end result of their teaching and practice is that we could not say "no" to the devil! Does it not matter to them that souls are being led astray with error? They pretend as though error is none existent. The only "error" they see is when God's loving warrior's call a spade a spade and are willing to spend and be spent in defending the Lord's precious word and his church. Many would not recognize error if they met it face to face. What about you?

There are many "uncertain sounds" being heard today. Consider this short article that appeared in the bulletin of the Lord's church in New Albany, Mississippi.

"UNCERTAIN SOUNDS" FROM MAGNOLIA YOUTH RALLY

Last week some of the adults traveled with some of our youth here at New Albany to attend a "Youth Event" hosted by **Magnolia Bible**

College.

Unfortunately, there were some "uncertain sounds" that came from this event which we cannot and do not support. There was handclapping and arm waving during the song service. Also, there were some who were identified in the audience as "dancing." Perhaps televised religious services have had some influence on the entertainment mentality which is being adopted among some brethren. Where will this lead? Will we stand and clap, holler and clap, jump and clap, whistle, throw our hats, hymnals and books in the air while we clap? Are not similar things done in ball stadiums?

Be assured I am not against youth gatherings as such. I have carried youth to, and participated in, some excellent youth services which have resulted in good fruit. Our youth are at a critical time in their lives. Fervently we desire to teach, edify, support, aid and guard them as they mature in Christ.

Moreover, the chaperons on this trip are to be commended in that they questioned the Magnolia sponsors about their concerns. However, they received unsatisfactory answers regarding these matters. Our youth are also to be commended in that they recognized things were wrong and did not participate.

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27). "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). Hopefully the leadership at Magnolia Bible College will recognize the lack of wisdom of what happened and take action to prevent this type of situation from happening again. Let us all be warned because such is becoming all too common in the brotherhood.

It is my view (Johnny Burkhart) that as long as these "uncertain sounds" come forth we should not support with our presence, finances, or in any way Magnolia Bible College.

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

Johnny Burkhart

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Here is another fine article about compromising the truth. It certainly

applies in all areas of the Christian life.

COMPROMISING TRUTH

Terry L. Roberts

Compromise is defined as follows: “To make a shameful or disreputable concession” (Webster Collegiate Dict. 10th Edition). Even though the word compromise is not in the Bible, there are many examples in the Scriptures of those who compromised. What did they compromise? The FAITH (TRUTH), that came from Almighty God (Rom. 10:17; Luke 8:11; John 8:31-32; 17:17).

Hymenaeus and Philetus compromised Truth by teaching the resurrection was passed already and led others to compromise (2 Tim. 2:17-18). Demas compromised Truth because he loved the things of the world more than God (2 Tim. 4:10; 1 John 2:15-17). Even Peter compromised Truth and was rebuked by the Apostle Paul for it (Acts 10:34-35; Gal. 2:11-14).

When compromise of the Truth has taken place, sin has occurred (1 John 3:4). Compromisers of Truth have always existed and will always exist as long as the world stands. God gave man the Truth and we are to live in accord with it. As children of God, let us never sell the Truth by compromising (Prov. 23:23). We expect those of the world to compromise because they don't love the Truth that Christ gave (John 1:17; 2 Thess. 2:10). But children of God are not of the world and should always be on guard and refrain from compromising Truth.

Preachers compromise Truth when they will not preach on certain subjects such as marriage, divorce and remarriage, the one church, church discipline, the sin of denominationalism or any subject neglected because it may offend someone in the audience (Matt. 15:1-13). Elders can be guilty of compromising Truth when they will not lead the congregation according to God's Word (e.g., withdrawal of fellowship from those who are in living in sin, 1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). So called Bible colleges (such as **Magnolia Bible College**) and schools and congregations

can and do compromise Truth when they allow denominational teachers/leaders and erring members of the church to use their facilities for services and events. By this action they confuse and contaminate the minds of young students of the Bible. There is one thing I have surely learned while living in rural Mississippi and from the Word of the Father, when you see a poisonous snake, you mark it and warn your children not to play with it (2 John 9-11; Rom. 16:17; Eph. 5:11; 1 John 4:1-6).

Truth today is compromised when people by their actions show they have little faith in God's power to save, the Gospel (Rom. 1:16). This is shown when individuals try to turn the LORD'S CHURCH into some type of Hollywood entertainment business by supplementing the Gospel with “drama teams” and “singing groups” for which there is no Bible authority (1 Cor. 1:18-21; Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16-17, congregational singing).

All Christians have a great responsibility in teaching and living the Truth (Matt. 28:18-20; James 3:1). What should be done if I or anyone compromises the Truth, even if their motive was sincere and did not realize they had compromised Truth until after the fact? Repentance is the answer. Godly sorrow worketh repentance (2 Cor. 7:10; 1 John 1:6-10; Acts 8:22).

Fellow Christians, let us walk in Truth and determine not to bring spots upon the precious Bride of Christ (the church) by compromising Truth. Let us teach Truth in word and in deed and not support those who compromise (Eph. 5:23-27; Acts 1:1).

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The compromising event mentioned above has reference to the Jan. 16, 1999, celebration of a “Dr. Martin Luther King Image Awards Banquet” which was held in the J. B. Hayes Activity Center. The Activity Center is on the grounds of Magnolia Bible College and is one of the more recent additions to their campus. Though this event was not sponsored by MBC, it was held in their facilities. It was reported that the highlight of the evening was supplied by

the “Entertainment from Magnolia Bible College's ZOMEN” who performed acappella hymns.

This event was a birthday celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. The newspaper reported that “Preston Hughes will serve as toastmaster for the evening, with the Rev. Victoria Sizemore-Tandy as toastmistress. The prelude will be given by Mrs. Ever Lee Presley and Mrs. Gladys Langdon will be the soloist. The invocation will be given by the Rev. Martha Williams, Alexander Memorial Presbyterian Church. Greetings will be given by Mrs. Yvonne J. Winters followed by entertainment from Magnolia Bible College's ZOMEN.” The newspaper reported the benediction would be “by the Rev. Louiza Dixon, Joint Heirs With Christ Church. The postlude will be performed by Mrs. Presley.”

While we recognize a school is not the church and can obviously do things the church cannot, this does not open the flood gates for a school (or even a private home) to allow just anything to go on with its endorsement and support. I agree with brother Roberts and his examination of the Scriptures, compromise with error is not the way to go (Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11).

Another interesting announcement was made in the **Magnolia Messenger** of March/April 1999. The paper announced a “drama team” that was being planned in the fall and would be available for “youth rallies, retreats, camps and other similar events.” It would be made up of Magnolia Bible College students and was announced to “be an exciting new way for MBC to assist churches and their youth groups.” The Lord's people are to preach the word (2 Tim. 4:2), not “play act” and dramatize the word.

A self-styled preacher in a so-called “church of Christ” told me one time, “preaching the Bible just won't do it anymore, we've got to have something that will attract people. Whatever draws a crowd can't be wrong.” It is so tragic when men abandon God's design and wisdom of preaching the Gospel (1 Cor. 1:18-21; Rom. 1:16) and substitute a new and exciting way of man's wisdom. God describes man's way as foolishness. What do you call it?

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH #3

Edification

Roger D. Campbell

Another aspect of the work of the church is edification. The Greek word *oikodome*, from which is translated our New Testament word “edification,” means “(the act of) building, building up — in the N.T. metaph., edifying, edification, i.e. the act of one who promotes another’s growth in Christian wisdom, piety, holiness, happiness” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon*, p.440). Edification refers to the spiritual strengthening of the church, doing that which results in the body of Christ being built up.

This is a topic that ought to be of great interest to each of us, because it is certainly a topic that is of great interest to Christ. This is evidenced in Ephesians 4:7-16, wherein we read the apostle Paul discussing matters that pertain to spiritual (miraculous) gifts that were in use in the first century. Who gave such gifts? When did He give them? To whom did He give them? For what purpose did He give them, and for how long did He give them? In the context of his discussion of such spiritual gifts, Paul wrote, “*And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers*” (4:11). What was the point of the Lord giving such gifts? The next verse gives the answer: “*For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*” (4:12).

The ultimate goal for using those spiritual gifts was to build up or spiritually strengthen the body of Christ. The age of such miraculous gifts has come and gone. In our time, through the word of God we can be built up without such gifts (Acts 20:32). However, the church is still the church. The church is still the body of Christ, and the Lord still desires for the church to be strengthened. How does that come about?

In 1 Thessalonians 5:11 there are three words of instruction about edification: “...edify one another.” We often speak about serving one another,

helping one another, or loving one another. This passage says that Christians need to *edify* one another. This reminds us of what the Bible says in 1 Samuel 23:16 in reference to what Jonathon did for David. The record says that Jonathon “strengthened his [David’s, RDC] hand in God.” We are instructed to “exhort one another daily” (Heb. 3:13). By exhorting one another to do that which is right in the sight of Jehovah, we are really encouraging one another and provoking one another unto love and good works (Heb. 10:24). Thus, the church is strengthened or edified when its members exhort one another to do that which pleases the Lord.

A second means by which the church can be edified is through worshipping God in spirit and in truth. We recognize that the context of 1 Corinthians 14 deals with the proper use of miraculous gifts. But as we study that chapter we must keep the big picture in mind. Again, the ultimate goal of having the spiritual gifts of that day was not simply to use them. The ultimate goal was to use those gifts to build up or edify the body of Christ. Throughout the text of the chapter, in discussing speaking in tongues, prophesying, and interpreting tongues, Paul’s message is, “Let all things be done unto edifying” (14:26). We must not lose sight of the fact that 1 Corinthians 14 is not only a spiritual gifts setting — it is also a worship setting. Where were the Corinthian saints using their gifts of speaking in tongues, prophesying, and interpreting tongues? Verse 23 notes that it was when the whole church came together in one place. Verse 15 speaks of singing, and that is worship. Verse 15 also speaks about prayer, and that is worship. Then, verses 29 and following speak of preaching, which is also part of a worship assembly.

When we come together to worship, the purpose of our worship is to pay homage to God, to give glory, honor, and praise to Him. However,

the benefit which we receive from worshipping Him in spirit and truth is that we are strengthened or edified in the process. Does not the “admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Col. 3:16) result in our being built up? Surely it does. We are made stronger by scriptural worship. God made it that way.

In connection with this, we certainly are edified or strengthened by the word of God. This happens in our individual lives as we study the Bible. The Lord’s exhortation to every Christian is: “*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*” (2 Peter 3:18). God wants us to grow. Just as numerical growth for the church does not come about by accident, so spiritual growth in our individual lives does not come about by accident. We must have spiritual growth as our goal — without such a goal or yearning, we will not grow like we ought to. “*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*” (1 Peter 2:2). As each member of the church is strengthened by personal Bible study, the body of Christ as a whole is made stronger.

Edification also comes about when we come together to study God’s word and when strong preaching is heard from the pulpit. Strong congregations exist only when there is a strong emphasis on Bible study and preaching the whole counsel of God. “*And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified*” (Acts 20:32). What is God’s word able to accomplish? Build us up. To what extent? Halfway? Three-fourths? God’s answer is that His word can build us up to the point that we can receive an inheritance. Which inheritance is that? The one that is “*incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you*” (1 Peter 1:4). If the word of

God can build us up and give us that type of inheritance, then why in the world would some try to hoodwink the religious world and some of our own members by showing *Andy Griffith* and *Barney Fife* comedy during what has been designated and advertised as a period of Bible study? Such is insulting and degrading. If we try to attract people with games, gadgets, and gimmicks, then we will have to have *Goober* and *Gomer* in order to keep them. Such is a far cry from preaching the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:5).

The message to Christians in James 1:21 reads, *“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”* Godly elders (and godly brothers who lead congregations that have no elders) need to see to it that when it is Bible class time, the subject that is studied is the Bible! On top of that, we need to make sure that those teachers who are in the classrooms leading the study of God’s word are not only those who are willing to teach, but are also faithful in their lifestyle and sound in their teaching. No exceptions!

What about entertainment as part of the work of edifying the church? It is not biblical. Some people might be in favor of it, and well-known folks might practice and promote it, but there is not a speck of scripture that indicates that the church ought to provide entertainment for its members or the world. Nothing in the Bible even remotely implies that entertainment in any shape or form could ever cause the body of Christ to be strengthened. There is no authority for the church to be in the entertainment business, and that includes drama presentations. Where is the authority for the church to build and maintain family life centers and gymnasiums? It is not in the word of God.

Brethren, we need to put our complete trust in the Lord God and stick with the Book. When we do that, then, and only then, the church will be edified. When we take things into our own hands with the Burger King approach of “have it your (our) way,” we err greatly.

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Strong Delusion...

(Continued from page 25)

“sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discern-er of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). The engrafted word is able to save your souls. *“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls”* (James 1:21). The word of God is active in man’s redemption and lives and abides forever. *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever”* (1 Peter 1:23).

In piercingly plain words Isaiah rebuked those who erected false standards. *“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight”* (Isa. 5:20,21). When Israel (God’s chosen people) accepted the false standards that were self-imposed, even they received condemnation. Again, Isaiah charged, *“Therefore as fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as the dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel”* (Isa. 5:24,25).

Today, there is an urgent need for God’s people to love the law of the Lord as did David in Psalm 119:97: *“O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”* Only by reading, studying, and applying God’s word to our lives can we be assured we are not straying from heaven’s way. No longer can we as a people fain ignorance of the departures from the truth currently underway among us. We cannot hide behind a shroud of selfrighteousness saying we must experience the departure for ourselves, or we will not consider it valid. Great courage is required to “love the truth” enough to defend it (Phil. 1:17). As in Micaiah’s day every member of the church of Christ has the responsibility to make it his

business to know whether preachers or teachers invited to speak to the congregation or preachers and teachers to whom the young people are sent out to hear are faithful proclaimers of the word of God or not. Like Ahab we must cease to favor only those preachers who tell us what we want to hear.

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The printer has now been paid for completely. Thanks so much to those who have helped with this great work. The reward is great. You can tell from the mailbag of those who appreciate this work.

The church has also purchased another piece of equipment that will greatly increase our capacity to publish *Seek The Old Paths*. This machine does the work of assembling, folding and stapling (booklet maker). The addition of this equipment will help us tremendously. The church here does not expect the readers to pay for it, but know that many would like to help with it if you knew about it. The mail and calls we receive is overwhelming and humbling to know how much good is being done. Brethren are being edified and encouraged in the most precious work in the world. Since the printer has been paid for and money is still coming in for it, we are applying that to this machine. Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your prayers and financial support.

Cost of Printer	\$ 11,871.65
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MORE LOVE FOR THE CHURCH

Ed Casteel

We live in a world where the church of Christ is not held by most in high regard. Often there are those who speak ill of her, and even by some who claim to be a part of her. Too many are they who are out to change her to fit their own agenda as well as the wants of today's society. The result of all this change is complete destruction of the beautiful bride of Christ. What we really need in the world today is more sincere love for the church. Let's consider some solid reasons why this is true.

1. We should love the church because it was a part of God's original plan, even before the foundation of the world. The apostle Paul wrote, *"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Eph. 3:10,11). Men have come along and have decided to start their own churches because they desire not to be a part of that which God had already established. That which man has begun is not the church of the New Testament, nor does it have any connection to it.

The church that was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world is not, nor can it be, just an after thought or a substitute measure because man would not accept what God has sent. Truly, it was a sad day when the Jews would not accept Jesus as the Savior. But, the prophets had already declared, *"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste"* (Isa. 28:16). To this promise the Psalmist added, *"the stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner"* (Psalm 118:22). Peter shows the proper application of these passages. *"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on*

him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believed he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Peter 2:6-8). How could Christ be the prophesied corner stone of the church if the church was just an emergency substitute measure to serve till man would accept what God originally planned?

Without a doubt, through careful study of the scriptures we learn that the church was in the mind of God even before the foundation of the world. This is why Jesus could describe Christ as the *"lamb slain from the foundation of the world"* (Rev. 13:8).

2. We should love the church because of the price that was paid for her existence. In a moving scene in Miletus, Paul talks with the elders who had joined him from Ephesus. He reminded them of the work he had done while there and also of their continual work and responsibility. To these elders he said, *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood"* (Acts 20:28). Notice the last part of this injunction, *"which he hath purchased with his own blood."* That was the price that was paid so the church might be established. I personally do not know of anything for which a higher price has ever been paid, do you?

This price was paid because of the great love God had for the souls of men. It was Jesus himself who said, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). To this Paul added, *"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Rom.

5:8). This demonstration of love was given that the lost of all society could be saved, and that salvation is made possible only in Christ (Acts 4:12), only in the church (Acts 2:47).

3. We should love the church because of the sacrifices that have been made to bring the church to man today. On Veterans Day and Memorial Day we should pause to think of the great sacrifices that have been made by those who have gone before us and have fought for the freedoms and liberties we now enjoy in the greatest nation of the world. Such tribute is only right and proper. But, have we ever stopped to consider the sacrifices that have been made to bring the church to us today? The Lord sent Ananias to teach the good news of salvation to Saul of Tarsus. Ananias is very reluctant to go for he has, *"heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem"* (Acts 9:13). But, the Lord said, *"Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake"* (Acts 9:15,16). If anyone has suffered for the sake of Christ and for the growth of the church it was Saul the persecutor who changed his life and became Paul the preacher of righteousness.

Let us not think he was the last to be called upon to suffer for the cause of Christ. All who are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ are to *"suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him"* (Rom. 8:17). Again Paul reminds us that all who live godly lives in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). Down through the ages, especially through the period of the Restoration, many have laid down their lives that the church for which God planned before the foundation of the world, and Jesus purchased with his own blood, could be continued and brought to us. Not even *"the gates of hell shall prevail against it"* (Matt. 16:18).

The church, like our great nation, has been preserved for man today through blood, sweat and tears. How dare we speak disparaging words against her. How dare we try to change or alter her where she no longer resembles that which God had in mind before the foundation of the world.

Oh, with a gladsome heart let us sing: "I Love thy kingdom Lord, the house of thine abode. The church our blest Redeemer saved with his own precious blood. I love thy church, O God! Her walls before Thee stand, Dear as the apple of Thine eye, And graven on thy hand. For her my tears shall fall, For her my prayers

ascend; To her my cares and toils be giv'n, Till toils and cares shall end. Beyond my highest joy I prize her heavenly ways, Her sweet communion, solemn vows, Her hymns of love and praise."

*127 W Seward St.
Ackerman, MS 39735*

16th Annual Seek The Old Paths Lectureship

July 22-26, 2001

Always the 4th Sunday in July

Traditions of Men — "Vain Religion"

SUNDAY, JULY 22

- 9:30 Traditions concerning Preachers*Raymond Hagood*
- 10:30 The Righteous Traditions of God*Jimmy Bates*
- 7:00 Bible Authority in Practice*Garland M. Robinson*
- 8:00 Traditions of men: Liberalism/Antism*Gilbert Gough*

MONDAY, JULY 23

- 9:00 Traditions of men Regarding Baptism.....*Ferrell Hester*
- 10:00 Traditions of men Regarding the Role of Women.....*Wayne Cox*
- 11:00 Traditions of men: Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage*Tom House*
- 1:30 Sayings Heard Today #1: "It really doesn't matter what you believe as long as you're sincere." "So many people cannot be wrong. "Jesus is the vine and the denominations are the branches."*Gary McDade*
- 2:30 Traditions of men: Catholicism*Ronald Choate*
- 7:00 Traditions of the Pharisees*James Boyd*
- 8:00 True Worship Pleases the Father John 4:24 ("spirit and truth").....*Charles Blair*

TUESDAY, JULY 24

- 9:00 Traditions of men regarding the Lord's supper.....*Mark Lindley*
- 10:00 Traditions of men regarding man's existence.....*Alan Adams*
- 11:00 Traditions of men concerning all of Life is Worship*Jerry Joseph*
- 1:30 Traditions of men regarding Singing/Music*Ken Burlison*
- 2:30 Traditions of men Regarding Millennialism*Randy Kea*
- 7:00 Worship can be in Vain.....*Ed Casteel*
- 8:00 Traditions of Men: Masonry.....*Terry Joe Kee*

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25

- 9:00 Traditions of men: Miracles, faith healing, etc.*Ed Floyd*
- 10:00 Traditions of men regarding Special Days, Christmas/Easter.....*Earl Claude*
- 11:00 Traditions of men Regarding the Old Law: 10 Commandments still binding, Sabbath keeping, etc.*Randy McQuade*
- 1:30 Sayings Heard Today #2: That's just your interpretation. We can't all see things alike. What makes you think you are right and everyone else is wrong?*Jim Blankenship*
- 2:30 Traditions of men regarding Giving: Fund raising, tithing, beg on TV/Radio, any day of the week, etc.*Freddie Shows*
- 7:00 Traditions of men: Calvinism*Eddy Craft*
- 8:00 Traditions among the Lord's People today: Order of worship, divided assembly, separate room for the Lord's supper on Sunday night, dress for worship, use of the building, reverence, attitude*Richard Guill*

THURSDAY, JULY 26

- 9:00 Traditions of men Regarding Salvation: Sinner's prayer, faith only, must have a salvation experience, mourner's bench, etc.*Mike Hogan*
- 10:00 Traditions of men regarding the Holy Spirit*Tom Bright*
- 11:00 Traditions of men regarding Mormonism.....*Victor Eskew*
- 1:30 Sayings Heard Today #3: Join the church of your choice, One church is as good as another*Virgil Hale*
- 2:30 The Bible Teaching on Unity.....*Dwight Fuqua*
- 7:00 Traditions of men regarding Bible versions.....*Nat Evans*
- 8:00 What is Right about the Church of Christ*Melvin Sapp*

Updates to the schedule can be seen on the web at
www.eastcorinth.org/lect2001.htm



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

Rodney Hilliard, one of our deacons at the East Corinth church of Christ, is planning on attending preaching school this fall at the Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies in Pensacola, Florida. He is in need of financial support. He is one of the finest and most faithful men I know. He and his wife Mendy and their young son Kyle (11 months) are certainly worthy of your support. He is already preaching in the area by appointment and doing a great job. You may contact him at 662-284-9581 or 79 CR 106, Corinth, MS 38834" **...editor**. "The church of Christ in Pocahtontas, Tennessee is looking for a **sound and faithful Gospel preacher**. This congregation is located about 25 miles from Corinth. Those interested may contact the elders: **Billy Smith** (901-376-8979) or **Leon Isom** (901-376-0943)" **...editor**. "I will be attending the Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies in August 2001. I would like to thank you for all the work you do for our Lord. I read your articles when I get my hands on one. I plan to attend the upcoming lectureship. Please keep me in your prayers as I keep the whole East Corinth congregation" **...Roger Scully, Jr., Morgan City, LA**. "A brother in Christ let me read a copy of *Seek the Old Paths* that's put out by you. I was impressed with the truths you print. The specific edition I read was refuting the New Age Community Churches. If it be at all possible please put me on your list. May the Lord continue to bless you and the ministry He has given you" **...Anthony Hromadka, Snyder, TX**. "Thank you so much of receiving regularly the inspired Biblical grounded teaching magazine *Seek the Old Paths* through the year 2000. I really enjoyed it and all the materials are so enrich and enlightening my spiritual life. I would like to request you kindly continue to send in the coming year of 2001. I don't want to miss any single copy of your publication. Our prayers are that God will bless you in your much needed work for the cost of Christ. May God bless you in your service and efforts to spread God's word through the printed pages and tapes" **...Ngulhopao Thomte, Manipur, India**. "I appreciate *STOP* very much and would appreciate receiving it" **...Garry Stanton, Cadiz, KY**. "We appreciate you all. Keep up the good work" **...Andre Washington, Houston, TX**. "I enjoy receiving and reading *STOP* and pray for those contributing to and overseeing this work. It is encouraging to read the truth of God proclaimed by those willing to stand fast for the Lord" **...Brian McCrery, Murfreesboro, TN**. "The elders and I appreciate the good material you have in *STOP*" **...Darrell Broking, Mountain City, TN**. "I hope this letter finds you and the brethren at East Corinth doing well. I am eagerly awaiting the audio cassettes from this year's lectureship. I do hope that I will be able to attend in future years. My wife and I appreciate the hard work of yourself, the elders and the congregation at East Corinth. I would also like to thank you for making your video tapes available to myself and others. It has been a great blessing. Thank you so very much for your time and dedication to the Lord" **...Jason Oneal White, Milliken, CO**. "I enjoy reading your publication of *Seek The Old Paths*. Seems that today many are seeking new paths. Many disturbing things are taking place in the brotherhood today. It's comforting to know there are those who are willing to stand up for the truth. Please place me on your mailing list" **...Jeffrey Tipton, Long Beach, MS**. "I would like to tell you how much I enjoy receiving your publication. I signed up while attending the Memphis Lectureships this past year with the Brown Trail School of Preaching. Unfortunately I have had to pull out of school due to some health issues which caused me to fall behind and require me to stay pretty well at home for now. (Positive test of colon cancer; much more testing to go yet)" **...Bud Paine, Lake Worth, TX**. "Don't want to miss getting your fine paper" **...Paul Tuller, Diana, TX**. "Dear Brethren, I'm a member of Wuhan Church of Christ in China, and my name is Gloria. A brother living in the States gave me your e-mail address and told me to stop at your web site, I found it fascinating! and as a college student I don't have my own computer, it's also difficult to share the information on line with some brothers and sisters here" **...Gloria, China**. "I serve as one of three elders at the Central Avenue Congregation in Fairborn Ohio. I came across the December 1999 copy of your publication "*Seek The Old Paths*" today and logged into your web site. I was impressed with the amount and quality of materials available on your site. I was pleased to see the material on the "Community Church." We just recently provided a copy of the "Spiritual Sword" to all our elders and deacons

on this same issue. We are astonished that brethren are so easily carried away into such a destructive doctrine as this. Thanks for your effort and pleas for brethren to return to the Old Paths. Please place me on your mailing list for the publication. In Him" **...Archie Caudill, Fairborn, OH**. "Please take me OFF your mailing list" **...Don Roll, Kihei, HI**. "Greetings from a brother in Christ in Vicksburg, MS. I happened upon your website, and wish to say that it was a fine oasis to stumble upon" **...Christopher Foote**. "I appreciate the efforts of the East Corinth Church of Christ to promote and hold to the Truth of the scriptures...Thank you for making available Questions and Answers...My sister has suggested that I subscribe to *Seek the Old Paths* that she says is published by East Corinth church" **...Bella Vista, AR**. "Hello, just wanted to say I am very proud of the super work that you are doing" **...David Peacock**. "I want you to know that you printed a neglected topic (about WITHDRAWAL). I repeat some brother who said, the Father is not going to let the CHURCH grow that does not deal with sinful members. You are to be commended for your part as editor of *STOP*. It makes me proud for the great honors that you receive from a BIG portion of the brotherhood. My wife Thelma and I pray rich blessings upon you, your faithful companion and precious children. Yours in the Saviour's love" **...L. Douglas & Thelma LaCourse, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada**. "Good web site, I'll be back for more" **...Casey**. "I wish to be placed on your mailing list to receive *STOP*. A brother in Christ gave me a copy which I found to be very enjoyable and encouraging reading. In times when churches of Christ appear bent toward following the ways of denominations, it's comforting to discover that there's brethren who both teach and herald the way of the Bible" **...Elwaine Johnson, Rowlett, TX**. "I would like to ask that you add us to your mailing list for your paper you mail out. I enjoyed reading it very much. Thank you very much. And we will pass it on to one of our other close members at Hermitage after reading it" **...Jerry Chaffin, Hermitage, TN**.

Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the **East Corinth Church of Christ** and is under the oversight of its elders. It is mailed **FREE** upon request. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3; II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:1; II Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless otherwise noted. Articles are also welcomed.

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** / Associate Editor: **Jimmy Bates**

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